

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph on page 1 of the specification under the heading Related Applications as follows:

The present application is a continuation-in-part of now abandoned U.S. national phase patent application serial number 09/508,998, filed June 15, 2000, based on international application number PCT/US97/16426, filed September 17, 1997, from which priority is claimed; and claims priority from a continuation in part of U.S. provisional patent application serial number 60/155,069, filed September 21, 1999, from which priority is claimed.

Please amend the first complete paragraph on page 16 of the specification as follows:

Fig. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating the steps of a method to conduct secure banking and Internet purchasing using the data ports. A purchaser 620 who wishes to conduct such business may use the data port, acting as a secure terminal 623, to contact his or her bank 621. At step 650, computer 370 monitors the security of the sealed data port (e.g., sealing and/or network interface firewalls) for any breaches and accordingly controls the flow of data through the data port, for example, for all of the concurrent or subsequent steps shown in FIG. 6. When a home owner initiates a banking transaction, PC interface 398 will transmit only the data port serial number, and not an initial or public encryption key, to the appropriate bank or other financial institution via the communications network 625. In turn, the bank would be the only institution, which has a look up table to associate the data port serial number with the initial or public key number. The bank, of course, will also have the private key required to ultimately decode the message. In this way, a thief would have to not only have to break to the private key to decrypt the financial transaction, but would also need to gain access to the serial number / public key table that is only held by the financial institution 621.

Applicant respectfully submits that the above amendment does not introduce new matter. The amendment finds support in the previously submitted specification (See e.g. specification, page 4 line 27- page 25 line 3, page 9 lines 21-23, and claim 14).

Please amend the last paragraph on page 16 of the specification that extends into page 17 of the specification as follows:

A particularly advantageous use of the data port according to the invention includes monitoring a personal medical alert device worn by a user inside the home. Such a device may, for example, transmit medical data on a periodic basis and be relayed to a physician through the data port according to the invention. For example, the device could transmit information by way of a wireless connection to the house power lines, for retransmission to the utility company via PC interface 398. Alternatively, such a device may be activated by the user to alert emergency medical services through the data port according to the invention. A similar advantage can be achieved to monitor movements of a user restricted to their homes by, for example, a court order. Computer 370 may include a processor or means 351 for detecting a satellite identified location of the personal medical alert device or other such device using, for example, network wireless transmission 361 which includes satellite communications. Computer 370 also may be configured to detect security breaches in sealed data ports (e.g. network interface 272, which is configured as a firewall) and accordingly control transmission of data through the sealed data port interface.

Applicant respectfully submits that above amendment doe not introduce new matter. The amendment finds support in the previously submitted specification. (See e.g. specification, page 4 line 27- page 5 line 3, page 5 line 15, page 9 lines 21-23, page 10 line 21, and claims 7 and 14).

Please amend the second complete paragraph on page 17 of the specification as follows:

Figs. 5a - 5e illustrate various arrangements for placement of the multifunction data port attached to or placed within a utility meter. Thus, in Fig 5a, an embodiment of the NY02:482313.1

invention where a multifunction data port 570 is located between the utility meter 510 and the meter box 514, via meter seal rings 418 518. The multifunction data port 570 is coupled to a communication line through stress relief 567 and cable 565.

Please amend the third complete on page 17 of the specification as follows:

In Fig. 5b, the utility interface apparatus or multifunction data port 570 is attached to the side of a meter box 514 using, for example, a seal ring 518, which may be similar to seal ring 418. In some cases, a conduit or connector 560 may connect data port 570 to a side of meter box 514. Conduit or connector 560 may , for example, be similar to connection line 460 (FIG. 4). In Fig. 5c, the utility interface apparatus or multifunction data port 570 attached to the front of a meter box 514. In Fig. 5d, the utility interface apparatus or multifunction data port 570 is attached to the side of a meter box 570. Finally, in Fig. 5e, the utility interface apparatus or multifunction data port 570 located inside of the meter box 514.

Please amend the third complete paragraph on page 18 of the specification as follows:

In addition, the bank 621has 621 has the option 635 to check if the vendor is not trustworthy, e.g., because it is a suspect company 635 company, or the option 636 to check if the vendor it is not a domestic business subject to U S laws 630, in which event additional purchase authorization requirements may be imposed 632.

Please amend the fourth and last complete paragraph on page 18 of the specification as follows:

Only when all safeties are met will the bank 621 guarantee payment to the vendor 6301 630 and the transaction consummated 631. In this way, the purchaser 620 is offered additional consumer protection to prevent transactions initiated by a third party has gained access to his or her credit card information or in dealings with potentially troublesome vendors.

Please amend the second complete paragraph on page 19 of the specification as follows:

The owner of the commercial or residential complex 700 can contract with the utility for wholesale electric power delivered by the power line 710 to the master meter 705 before and then distributes this power is distributed over the internal lines 715 to each sub meter 745 in the complex 700. Each sub-meter 745 and the multifunction data port 735 are attached under seal (not shown) in the sub meter box 740. The data port 735 ~~a unit is identified as Datapump Gateway®, which is one of the registered trademarks for the device; Gateway Meter® is a second trademark.~~ may be a commercially obtained data port unit (for example, a unit which is marketed under the name DATAPUMP GATEWAY or GATEWAY METER). The landlord also can obtain broad band data access to the Internet and digital data via the external signal access connection 720, which can be wireless, OC1, T1, DSL, coax cable or direct fiber, or by any combinations of connections through any technologies or spectra as outlined herein. The internal Internet Router 725 sends this digital data over the internal signal lines 730 to the individual multifunction data ports 735 located in each unit. The internal signal lines 730 can be optic fiber, wireless, twisted pair telephone lines etc. or they can represent use of the internal power lines 715 for data distribution and Internet access.